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ABSTRACT

An evaluation, informed by a literature review, was conducted of current PALS (Partners in Active Learning Support) programs run by the FFA (Future Farmers of America), through site visits and survey administration. Site visits were made to four participating FFA chapters to evaluate the program, which matches high school mentors with grade school students to form one-on-one relationships that were intended to help keep students in school. Survey data were obtained from 11 of the 32 sites. The following were studied: whether high school and elementary school students were more likely to remain in school and develop leadership skills as a result of PALS, the degree of support for the program and impact of the program in the school and community, the types of activities used in weekly mentor/mentee sessions, how to reduce risk factors in the community and the school associated with adolescent problem behavior, and the longevity of PALS in participating chapters. Findings were presented in terms of the seven objectives of the study. The study concluded that the PALS program seemed to improve the elementary students' attitudes about the importance of school, and it improved their self-esteem; students were more likely to attend school because their "big friend" was coming that day. Many PALS sites were not continued because of changes in school personnel, however, and institutionalizing the program was recommended. (The project survey and other site visit documents are included in the six appendixes of the report, which contains 11 references.) (KC)

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ED 430 096

EVALUATION OF THE PALS (PARTNERS IN ACTIVE LEARNING SUPPORT) MENTORING PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

FOR

NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

June 30, 1996

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CHAPTER 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to provide a complete evaluation of current PALS (Partners in Active Learning Support) sites. Specific objectives of the project were:

1. To determine if high school and elementary school students are more likely to be retained in school after having participated in PALS.
2. To determine specific leadership skills that are learned/acquired by the high school and elementary school students as a result of PALS.
3. To determine the degree of school administrative, staff, and community support of the PALS program.
4. To evaluate the impact the PALS program has in the local community.
5. To identify the types of activities used in weekly mentor/mentee sessions; do agricultural based activities accomplish the program goals of PALS?
6. To reduce risk factors in the community and school associated with adolescent problem behavior (delinquency, school drop out, alcohol, etc.)
7. To determine the longevity of PALS in participating chapters.

The evaluation report is organized into three chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the evaluation, a summary of findings, and a listing of recommendations. Chapter 2 gives the written comments for the quantitative survey portion of the study. Chapter 3 gives more detailed findings for the qualitative site visits portion of the study.

METHODOLOGY

Quantitative Survey

In September, 1995 the Program Evaluator developed the evaluation instruments for the quantitative survey using project guidelines and existing PALS Program evaluation instruments (see Appendix A). A literature review was conducted to assist in developing survey items. A summary of the relevant literature is presented in this chapter. In July, 1995 the Program Evaluator contacted Greg Egan of the National FFA Organization and asked for a list of all chapters which had participated in the original, pilot, and open phases of PALS implementation to that point. Mr. Egan sent a list of 149 original chapters and 525 other participating chapters. From a formula used to determine random sample size for adequate representation of a population, it was determined that nine original and 31 other chapters needed to be selected. A random number generator was used to select the 40 chapters plus an additional 21 original and 30 other chapters for potential replacements. Starting in October, 1995 telephone calls were made to the advisors of the selected chapters to solicit approval for their participation. From the telephone calls it was determined that 70 percent of the original chapters were either no longer participating in PALS or did not want to participate in the evaluation. From the telephone calls it was determined that 62 percent of the other chapters were either no longer participating in PALS or had never started participation. The final sample consisted of nine original chapters and 23 other chapter for a total of 32 chapters (see Appendix B for list of participating chapters). Because of the dropout and non-participation rate the evaluator determined that 32 was an appropriate sample size for representation of the true population of participating chapters.

It was determined that early spring, 1996 was the optimal time to collect the survey data. In February, 1996 packets containing an introductory letter, an instruction sheet, survey instruments, scantron-type response sheets, and a postage-paid

return envelope were mailed to the sample (see Appendix C). Three responses were received on March 11, 1996. On March 12, 1996 all non-respondents were called and asked to return the surveys. On April 2, 1996 all non-respondents were called again and asked to return the surveys. An additional four responses were returned by April 24, 1996. Again, all non-respondents received telephone calls and all replied that the surveys would be returned. On May 6, 1996 an additional four responses had been received. Non-respondents received a final telephone call; however, no further responses were received. Therefore, the final response rate was 11 out of 32 or 34.4 percent.

Data were analyzed using SPSSPC+, a statistical software package. Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, and percentage were calculated. A summary of major findings is in Chapter 1. This part of the research project primarily was used to address objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7.

Qualitative Site Visits

Interview questions and observations were used to develop the case studies of quality PALS programs (see Appendix D). In September, 1995 areas of inquiry were constructed using the guidelines from the request for proposals and a review of leadership and mentoring literature. It was determined that the sites for the qualitative visits should be purposefully selected based on certain characteristics. First, one chapter from each of the four FFA national regions would be selected. Second, school and community demographics would be taken into consideration so that sites would vary in terms of rural/urban, production agriculture/non-production agriculture, and percentage of ethnicity. Next, the PALS program in the chapter must have been on-going for at least two years. Finally, each chapter must have been nominated as an exemplary PALS program by either the State Agricultural Education Program Leader or the State FFA Executive Secretary. Each state was placed into its FFA National Region and a random number generator used to seed the states from first to last.

Beginning in January, 1996 the first state on the list for each of the regions was called. The first state contacted in the Southern and Western regions was able to nominate a chapter, whereas the Eastern and Western regions required two additional telephone calls each. The selected states were Georgia (Southern Region), Wisconsin (Central Region), Virginia (Eastern Region), and Texas (Western Region) (see Appendix E for list of participating chapters). The FFA advisor for each of the nominated chapters was contacted and asked to participate in a site visit. After the initial telephone call, a letter was mailed giving instructions and suggestions on coordinating the visit (see Appendix F). All site visits were conducted during March and April, 1996.

Data were collected from participants, parents, counselors, administrators, teachers, coordinators, and community members. The qualitative data were analyzed for themes, commonalties and, uniqueness. This was accomplished by reading observation notes, listening to the tape-recorded interviews, and reading printed material for data that kept repeating. These data were further analyzed and placed into categories. Finally, logical themes were developed after reviewing the data a final time. The results of the case studies were used to address all of the objectives; however, objectives 2 and 6 were primarily addressed using these results.

RELEVANT LITERATURE

Over the past two decades many papers, dissertations, and books have been written concerning the effects of peer counseling, peer mentoring, and peer tutoring on students at the high school, middle school and elementary school levels. While doing the literature search for the National FFA Organization's PALS Program, it was found that most of the information on peer mentoring was for same-age peers. Because of PALS' purpose of connecting a high school student with an at-risk elementary grade student this was a problem. This lack of pertinent information created a need for a

review of all literature on peer relationships and mentoring with the hope that somewhere there was information that would be useful to this program.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this literature review was to synthesize information about peer relationship and peer mentoring in both same-age and cross-age groups into a useful format. Specifically, this section will address three areas:

Importance of Peer Relationships on Academic Success,

Importance of Peer Relationships on Social Development and Acceptance,

Benefits to Mentor and Mentee from a Peer Mentoring Relationship.

Methodology

It is obvious that the amount of valuable information concerning peer relationships would be too great even for a book let alone a small paper; therefore, the review was narrowed into three main categories: literature on peer relationships, literature on peer mentoring, and literature on cross-age mentoring. Using these three headings, and also "mentoring" by itself, an ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) search was conducted that resulted in nearly 2,000 different pieces of information. The search was narrowed further by using the subcategories of importance of peer (relationships, interaction, mentoring, and cross-age mentoring) on school success; school attendance and social development; skill acquisition; and support for (cross-age) peer mentoring in the community, among school staff and administration, and with parents. This search again resulted in more information than could be used, so the search was further narrowed. The final search was performed using the key words of "Peer relationships," "mentoring, school attendance," and "attendance patterns." From the references and bibliographies of papers reviewed, the search was broadened to include literature not in the ERIC database. In addition, an open search of topics was conducted in the journal Peer Facilitator Quarterly for all issues for the years 1990-1995. Finally, the Proceedings of the National Agricultural

Education Research Meeting for the years 1990-1995 were reviewed for papers on mentoring.

Importance of Peer Relationships on Academic Success

Key to any study on peer relationships are the effects that the relationship has on school and life success. It has been shown that a child's ability to relate to, communicate with, and form relationships with his/her peers as early as age six determine that child's success in both school and work throughout life (Ladd, 1990). Children are aware of how others view them (MacDonald, 1993). Ladd (1990) found that peer rejection, from early childhood on, is strongly associated with unfavorable attitudes towards school, higher levels of school avoidance, and lower academic performance levels.

Outside of overall success, but perhaps also key to determining it, is the effect peer relationships have on school success, school attendance, and enjoyment of school. School success is defined for this paper as a liking of school, and performing at peak personal performance levels. A student who receives peer acceptance and demonstrates the ability to make new friends is more likely to like school and have a higher academic performance (Benard, 1990). Risks of poor peer relationships are many: poor mental health, dropping out of school, low achievement, other school difficulties, poor employment history, and so forth (Katz & McHolland, 1991).

Importance of Peer Relationships on Social Development and Acceptance

Steinberg (1992) stated that children use relationships with peers to refine their abilities to share, to handle anger, and to sustain emotional closeness. Chronic peer rejection is linked with childhood depression, low self-esteem, early school leaving, and delinquent behavior. Children that come from family situations, and socio-economic situations that prevent developing strong positive friendships and peer relationships need a positive peer role model to help them develop appropriate social skills, and values. Empirical research demonstrates the importance of children's peer

relations to socialization and socio-moral development. It shows that childhood problems in peer relations were predictive of serious adjustment problems in adolescence and adulthood (Battistich, Solomon, & Delvechi, 1990). Peer interactions are an arena in addition to family, school, and community which provide support, opportunities, and models for prosocial development. In this arena, children directly learn attitudes, values, and skills through peer modeling and reinforcement. Through peer interaction children learn critical social skills such as impulse control, communication, creative and critical thinking, and relationship or friendship skills (Kellam et. al, 1982).

Peer relationships become even more important when we realize with what frequency, and intensity they occur. Peer interactions, compared to interactions with adults, tend to be more frequent, intense, and diverse and allow for more experimentation, and thus are powerful arenas for shaping a youth's behavior (Sachnoff, 1984). This becomes critical when there is no social support structure at home, in the schools, or in the community because those children must rely on peer relationships. Understanding the level of importance peer relationships are to a child helps us to make sense of a child's need for a positive peer in their life. It also makes it clear why there is such an appeal for children that lack a good positive peer model to turn to gangs.

Benefits to Mentor and Mentee from a Peer Mentoring Relationship

Having discussed the importance of peer relationships to school success, and social development and acceptance, it is necessary to look at the benefits of mentoring relationships for both the mentor and the mentee. Perhaps the greatest benefit one receives in a mentoring relationship is that both the mentor and mentee experience being needed, valued, and respected by another person which allows them to view themselves as worthwhile (Hedien, 1987). Benard (1990) listed seven ways in which peer relationships contribute to a child's social and cognitive development and

socialization. Included among these is the idea that peer interactions are powerful influences on a child's development of identity and autonomy. It is through peer relationships that a frame of reference for perceiving oneself is developed and that the values and social sensitivity required for autonomy are fostered (Johnson and Johnson, 1983; deRosenroll, 1989).

In cross-age mentoring more may be asked of the mentor than in same-age peer counseling; however, the return can also be more rewarding and fulfilling. Mentoring, according to Riessman (1990), is a positive experience for the mentor for the following reasons:

1. The mentor feels good because he or she has something to give.
2. It is an active role in which the mentor feels less dependent.
3. The mentor obtains a feeling of social usefulness.
4. It is potentially empowering as it gives the mentor a sense of control, a feeling of being capable of doing something.

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Quantitative Survey

The data for the findings discussed below came from the analysis of the three survey instruments used to collect data. The findings are presented in tabular form and reported using frequencies, means, etc. on an item-by-item basis.

The demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1. The largest percentage of mentors were in the twelfth grade with the next largest percentage in the tenth grade, followed by eleventh, then ninth graders. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the mentors were female while forty-one percent (41%) of the mentees were female. Twenty-two percent (22%) of the male mentors had a female mentee, whereas forty-three percent (43%) of the female mentors had a male mentee (not reported in the table). Most of the mentors (95%) were White, while twenty-three percent (23%) of the mentees were from a minority ethnic group.

Approximately two-fifths of the mentors had a friend who had dropped out of school. More than two-thirds of the mentors wanted to continue in PALS for the next year; however, there was a twelve percent (12%) non-response rate for this question. Finally, almost all (90%) of the mentors reported that they were FFA members.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristic		Mentors n *	Mentors % **	Mentees n *	Mentees % **
Grade in School	9	17	14	N/A	N/A
	10	36	30	N/A	N/A
	11	18	15	N/A	N/A
	12	47	39	N/A	N/A
Gender	Female	67	56	47	41
	Male	53	44	69	59
Ethnicity	Black	4	3	25	22
	Hispanic	1	1	1	1
	White	114	95	87	77
Have a friend who has dropped out of school	Yes	52	43	N/A	N/A
	No	68	57	N/A	N/A
Want to continue in PALS next year	Yes	83	69	N/A	N/A
	No	23	19	N/A	N/A
Membership in FFA	Yes	107	89	N/A	N/A
	No	13	11	N/A	N/A

* n = those respondents who answered that item
** % = May not add to 100% because of non-responses and rounding
N/A = Not applicable or Not available

Table 2 shows the means, frequencies, and number of responses for each of the items on the survey for mentors. The means are on a Likert-type scale of "1" equals strongly disagree, "2" equals disagree, "3" equals neutral, "4" equals agree, and "5" equals strongly agree. For the three items in the "I have benefited from PALS" section the means ranged from 3.6 to 4.1. For the four items in the "PALS helped me improve my attitude toward school" section the means ranged from 3.0 to 3.3. For the three items in the "PALS helped improve my attitude toward home" section the means ranged from 3.0 to 4.0. For the two items in the "PALS helped improve my attitude toward work" section the means were both a 3.3. For the three items in the "PALS helped improve my attitude toward myself" section the means ranged from 3.4 to 3.6. For the three items in the "PALS helped improve my attitude toward children" section the means ranged from 3.9 to 4.1. For the two items in the "PALS helped improve my attitude toward peers" section the means were both a 4.1. For the three items in the "I

helped my mentee benefit from PALS" section the means ranged from 3.8 to 4.2. For the four items in the "Staying in school is important" section" the means ranged from 4.0 to 4.5. For the three items in the "My PALS training was helpful" section the means ranged from 3.2 to 3.5.

Table 2. Mentor Survey Responses

Item	n *	Mean **	Frequency **				
			SD	D	N	A	SA
My mentee and I are friends.	114	4.1	1	4	13	55	41
I expect more from myself because I am a PAL.	116	3.6	5	10	30	49	22
My mentee expects me to lead and set a good example.	115	3.9	4	6	23	43	39
My grades have improved since I became a PAL.	114	3.0	5	21	67	14	7
My school attendance has improved since I became a PAL.	113	3.0	7	17	65	18	6
My self discipline at school has improved since I became a PAL.	114	3.2	4	14	56	30	10
I participate in more activities since I became a PAL.	112	3.3	4	14	45	36	13
I understand my parents/guardians better since I became a PAL.	114	3.0	7	20	54	27	6
My behavior at home has improved since I became a PAL.	114	3.1	4	18	65	21	6
My parents/guardians were supportive of my being a PAL.	114	4.0	1	6	19	58	30
I am more responsible about work since I became a PAL.	114	3.3	4	6	62	36	6
I have set goals for current/future work since I became a PAL.	114	3.3	4	15	48	36	11
I feel more motivated and responsible since I became a PAL.	114	3.6	3	6	38	53	14
I feel more self confident since I became a PAL.	114	3.5	4	6	46	50	8
My self-esteem has been raised since I became a PAL.	114	3.4	4	6	54	38	12
I think my mentee respects me.	114	4.1	4	3	11	61	35
I am more tolerant of younger students since I became a PAL.	114	3.9	2	7	23	52	30
I look forward to meeting with my mentee.	114	4.1	1	5	14	56	38
I enjoy interacting with people.	117	4.1	3	2	21	42	49
Most of my friends approve of my being a PAL.	114	4.1	2	3	16	53	40
I helped my mentee by caring and listening.	113	4.0	0	4	13	71	25
I helped my mentee by being a good role model.	113	4.2	0	2	14	61	36
I helped my mentee by assisting with school work.	113	3.8	2	6	27	56	22
Liking school is a reason for staying school.	119	4.0	2	5	17	59	36
Wanting to go to college is a reason to stay in school.	119	4.3	1	4	12	45	57

Being with my friends is a reason to stay in school.	119	4.0	3	6	19	57	34
My parents/guardians tell me it is important to stay in school.	119	4.5	1	1	8	35	74
I need more training in Leadership.	114	3.5	2	17	33	48	14
I need more training in Listening/Communication skills.	114	3.3	5	15	46	40	8
I need more training in Human development.	112	3.2	6	17	44	34	11

* n = those respondents who answered that item

** 1/SD = Strongly Disagree, 2/D = Disagree, 3/N = Neutral, 4/A = Agree, 5/SA = Strongly Agree

Table 3 shows the means, frequencies, and number of responses for each of the items on the survey for parents or guardians of mentors. The means are on a Likert-type scale of "1" equals strongly disagree, "2" equals disagree, "3" equals neutral, "4" equals agree, and "5" equals strongly agree. For the four items in the "My child benefited from PALS" section the means ranged from 3.5 to 4.1. For the four items in the "PALS helped me improve my child's attitude toward school" section the means ranged from 3.1 to 3.5. For the two items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward home" section the means ranged from 3.1 to 3.2. For the two items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward work" section the means ranged from 3.3 to 3.7. For the three items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward him/herself" section the means ranged from 3.6 to 3.8. For the six items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward children" section the means ranged from 3.8 to 4.7. For the three items in the "My child is weak in the following areas" section the means ranged from a 2.0 to a 2.1. For the three items in the "My child has shown improvement in the following areas" section the means ranged from 2.7 to 3.0. For the five items in the "Staying in school is important" section" the means ranged from 4.0 to 4.5.

Table 3. Parent/Guardian of Mentors Survey Responses

Item	n *	Mean **	Frequency **				
			SD	D	N	A	SA
Mentee and mentor became friends.	22	4.1	0	0	1	17	4
Mentor demanded more of him/herself.	22	3.5	1	3	6	9	3
The mentee benefited from having a good role model.	22	4.1	0	0	2	15	5
The mentee benefited from the help with school work.	22	3.6	0	1	8	11	2
My child's grades have improved since PALS.	22	3.2	0	0	18	3	1
My child's school attendance has improved since PALS.	22	3.2	0	0	19	1	2
My child's discipline at school has improved since PALS.	22	3.1	0	1	18	2	1
My child is more involved in activities since PALS.	22	3.5	1	0	11	8	2
My child seems to understand me better since PALS.	22	3.2	0	1	17	3	1
My child's behavior at home has improved since PALS.	22	3.1	0	1	18	2	1
My child likes to work since PALS.	22	3.3	0	1	16	2	3
My child has goals for current/future work since PALS.	22	3.7	0	0	10	9	3
My child is more motivated and responsible since PALS.	22	3.6	0	0	9	12	1
My child is more self confident since PALS.	22	3.8	0	0	7	13	2
My child's self -esteem has been raised since PALS.	22	3.7	0	0	9	10	3
My child has gained respect for mentee.	22	3.9	0	0	5	14	3
My child is more tolerant of younger children since PALS.	22	4.0	0	0	4	14	4
My child enjoys the mentoring sessions.	22	4.2	0	0	3	12	7
I was supportive of my child being in PALS.	22	4.7	0	0	1	4	17
I attended meetings and socials that I was invited to.	22	3.9	0	1	6	10	5
I helped with transportation and materials.	22	3.8	0	0	10	6	6
Before PALS, my child was weak in Reading/Writing.	22	2.1	8	4	9	1	0
Before PALS, my child was weak in Mathematics.	22	2.0	9	3	10	0	0
Before PALS, my child was weak in Social Skills.	22	2.1	8	3	11	0	0
Since PALS, my child has improved in Reading/Writing.	22	2.7	3	3	15	0	1

Since PALS, my child has shown improvement in Math.	22	2.7	3	2	16	0	1
Since PALS, my child has improved in Social Skills.	22	3.0	2	2	13	4	1
Since participating in PALS, my child likes school.	22	3.5	0	0	11	10	1
Since PALS, my child wants to go to college.	22	3.5	0	0	13	6	3
Since PALS, my child likes being with friends.	22	3.6	0	0	12	6	4
I tell my child that staying in school is important.	21	4.6	0	0	2	4	15
PALS helped in keeping my child in school.	21	3.0	2	1	15	2	1

* n = those respondents who answered that item

** 1/SD = Strongly Disagree, 2/D = Disagree, 3/N = Neutral, 4/A = Agree, 5/SA = Strongly Agree

Table 4 shows the means, frequencies, and number of responses for each of the items on the survey for parents or guardians of mentees. The means are on a Likert-type scale of "1" equals strongly disagree, "2" equals disagree, "3" equals neutral, "4" equals agree, and "5" equals strongly agree. For the four items in the "My child benefited from PALS" section the means ranged from 3.5 to 4.4. For the four items in the "PALS helped me improve my child's attitude toward school" section the means ranged from 3.3 to 3.5. For the two items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward home" section the means ranged from 3.3 to 3.4. For the two items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward work" section the means ranged from 3.4 to 3.6. For the three items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward him/herself" section the means ranged from 3.7 to 3.8. For the six items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward children" section the means ranged from 3.1 to 4.3. For the three items in the "My child is weak in the following areas" section the means ranged from a 3.2 to a 3.4. For the three items in the "My child has shown improvement in the following areas" section the means ranged from 3.5 to 3.6. For the five items in the "Staying in school is important" section" the means ranged from 3.1 to 4.5.

Table 4. Parent/Guardian of Mentees Survey Responses

Item	n *	Mean **	Frequency **				
			SD	D	N	A	SA
Mentee and mentor became friends.	75	4.0	1	1	6	59	8
Mentee demanded more of him/herself.	75	3.5	2	9	19	42	3
The mentee benefited from having a good role model.	75	4.4	1	0	2	35	37
The mentee benefited from the help with school work.	75	3.9	0	4	10	51	10
My child's grades have improved since PALS.	75	3.4	4	9	21	36	5
My child's school attendance has improved since PALS.	75	3.4	1	10	26	31	7
My child's discipline at school has improved since PALS.	75	3.5	1	5	27	37	5
My child is more involved in activities since PALS.	75	3.3	3	7	36	24	5
My child seems to understand me better since PALS.	75	3.4	2	8	28	32	5
My child's behavior at home has improved since PALS.	75	3.3	3	7	39	19	7
My child likes to work since PALS.	75	3.6	1	5	25	34	10
My child has goals for current/future work since PALS.	75	3.4	2	5	40	20	8
My child is more motivated and responsible since PALS.	75	3.7	1	2	26	39	7
My child is more self confident since PALS.	75	3.8	1	1	18	44	11
My child's self -esteem has been raised since PALS.	75	3.8	0	2	27	31	15
My child has gained respect for mentor.	75	4.0	0	2	9	51	13
My child is more tolerant of younger children since PALS.	75	3.4	3	7	30	27	8
My child enjoys the mentoring sessions.	75	4.3	1	2	5	33	34
I was supportive of my child being in PALS.	74	4.0	0	0	25	25	24
I attended meetings and socials that I was invited to.	75	3.4	2	1	46	16	10
I helped with transportation and materials.	75	3.1	3	12	41	11	8
Before PALS, my child was weak in Reading/Writing.	75	3.4	3	11	25	23	13
Before PALS, my child was weak in Mathematics.	75	3.2	5	11	33	18	8
Before PALS, my child was weak in Social Skills.	75	3.3	6	8	34	13	14
Since PALS, my child has improved in Reading/Writing.	75	3.6	3	10	14	36	12

Since PALS, my child has improved in Mathematics.	75	3.5	3	7	25	30	10
Since PALS, my child has improved in Social Skills.	75	3.6	1	6	23	36	9
Since participating in PALS, my child likes school.	75	3.8	0	4	20	40	11
Since PALS, my child wants to go to college.	75	3.1	2	19	29	16	9
Since PALS, my child likes being with friends.	75	3.9	0	2	17	46	10
I tell my child that staying in school is important.	75	4.5	0	3	9	13	50
PALS helped in keeping my child in school.	74	3.7	4	5	26	14	25

* n = those respondents who answered that item

** 1/SD = Strongly Disagree, 2/D = Disagree, 3/N = Neutral, 4/A = Agree, 5/SA = Strongly Agree

Table 5 shows the means, frequencies, and number of responses for each of the items on the survey for teachers and counselors of both mentors and mentees. The means are on a Likert-type scale of "1" equals None of the students (0-19%) fit that item, "2" equals Few (20-39%), "3" equals Some (40-59%), "4" equals Most (60-79%), and "5" equals All (80-100%). For the four items in the "Mentors/mentees benefited from PALS" section the means ranged from 3.5 to 4.3. For the three items in the "PALS helped improve student attitudes toward school" section the means ranged from 3.2 to 3.4. For the three items in the "PALS helped improve student attitudes toward home" section the means ranged from 2.6 to 2.7. For the two items in the "PALS helped improve student attitudes toward work" section the means were both 3.1. For the three items in the "PALS helped improve student attitudes toward self" section the means ranged from 3.6 to 3.8. For the six items in the "PALS helped improve my child's attitude toward children" section the means ranged from 3.4 to 3.8. For the three items in the "PALS improved student attitudes toward children" section the means ranged from a 3.5 to a 4.3. For the two items in the PALS improved student attitudes toward peers" section the means ranged from 3.7 to 3.8. For the three items in the "PALS training was helpful" section the means ranged from 3.3 to 3.8. For the four items in the "Staying in school is important" section" the means ranged from 3.4 to 4.1. For the four items in the "PALS had positive support" section the means ranged from 3.0 to 4.4.

Table 5. Counselor/Teacher Survey Responses

Item	n *	Mean **	Frequency **				
			None	Few	Some	Most	All
Mentors and mentees became friends because of PALS.	16	3.8	1	1	3	6	5
Mentors demanded more of themselves because of PALS.	14	3.8	0	1	5	4	4
The mentee benefited from having a good role model.	16	4.3	0	0	2	7	7
The mentee benefited from the help with school work.	16	3.5	1	1	6	5	3
Since PALS, Mentors'/Mentees' grades have improved.	15	3.2	0	3	8	2	2
Since PALS, Mentors'/Mentees' attendance has improved.	15	3.2	2	1	6	4	2
Since PALS, Mentors'/Mentees' discipline has improved.	15	3.4	1	1	7	3	3
Since PALS, Mentors/Mentees understand parents better.	14	2.7	1	6	4	2	1
Since PALS, parents report improved behavior at home.	14	2.6	3	4	3	4	0
Since PALS, parents report more participation at home.	14	2.6	2	4	5	3	0
Since PALS, Mentors are more responsible about work.	15	3.1	1	3	5	5	1
Since PALS, Mentors have goals for current/future work.	15	3.1	1	3	6	4	1
Since PALS, Mentors/Mentees are motivated & responsible.	16	3.4	1	0	8	5	2
Since PALS, Mentors/Mentees are more self confident.	16	3.5	1	1	5	7	2
Since PALS, Mentors'/Mentees' self-esteems are raised.	16	3.8	1	0	3	9	3
Mentors have gained respect of mentees.	15	4.0	1	0	1	9	4
Mentors/Mentees are more tolerant of younger students.	15	3.5	1	2	4	5	3
Mentors and mentees enjoy their sessions together.	15	4.3	0	1	2	4	8
Since PALS, Mentors/Mentees enjoy interacting with people.	16	3.7	0	1	5	8	2
Since PALS, Mentors and mentees have peer approval.	15	3.8	0	1	4	7	3
Mentors need more training in Leadership.	16	3.3	0	4	6	4	2
Mentors need more training in Communication Skills.	16	3.6	1	2	3	6	4
Mentors need more training in Human Development.	16	3.8	0	1	6	5	4
Mentors/mentees like school.	16	3.4	0	2	5	9	0
Mentors want to go to college.	14	3.5	0	2	5	5	2

Mentors/mentees like being with friends.	16	4.1	0	0	3	8	5
Mentors/mentees' parents tell them staying in school is important.	15	4.1	0	0	3	8	4
Other teachers in the school building supported the project.	16	4.3	0	1	2	4	9
Mentors'/mentees' parents were supportive and involved.	16	3.8	0	2	4	5	5
Community members were involved with the project.	16	3.0	3	0	6	2	5
The school administrators supported the project.	15	4.4	0	0	3	3	9

* n = those respondents who answered that item

** 1 = None (0-19%), 2 = Few (20-39%), 3 = Some (40-59%), 4 = Most (60-79%), 5 = All (80-100%)

Qualitative Site Visits

Site visits were made to four FFA chapters conducting exemplary PALS programs. While on-site, the researcher observed a PALS mentoring session, observed high school and elementary school students and interviewed the agriculture teacher, high school and elementary school principals and guidance counselors, other teachers involved in the program, and parents. From these the following commonalties, uniqueness, and themes emerged.

Descriptive Characteristics

The PALS program is being conducted in schools of all sizes. One of the schools visited had 2,900 plus students in grades 9 through 12; whereas, a second school had grades pre-K through 12 all in the same building. Two of the schools were multi-teacher agricultural education programs while the other two were single teacher departments. One of the schools was located in a largely affluent urban area, one in a mostly blue-collar small town, one in a farming community, and one described itself as a small town rapidly becoming a bedroom community. Three of the schools had production agriculture in the immediate surrounding area. Two of the schools had a significant ethnic population while the other two had a predominantly majority population.

Themes

The agriculture teacher makes the PALS program. The teacher must be organized and enthusiastic. Without either, this type of program will not succeed. PALS is a powerful program that directly influences the lives of young children. It cannot be entered into without planning and commitment. PALS is not a program that a teacher can do "just to participate" or only do with minimal effort. Having said that, all agreed that for the program to be successful the mentors must take ownership of the program. The students must feel wanted and needed and know that their opinions are respected. PALS is not a "one-shot" activity; it must be done well or not at all.

Administration and community support are critical. Administrators must be provided answers to questions about liability, mentor training, travel arrangements, out-of-school activities, and overall organization of the program. Direct administration and community involvement does not seem to be critical. Very few administrators have time to be heavily involved in a program such as PALS. In addition, it seems as if getting community members to volunteer to organize and/or coordinate PALS over a long period of time is impossible. In all of the schools visited, the primary coordinator was either the agriculture teacher, a guidance counselor, or the two of them working closely together. Having the support and involvement of the elementary guidance counselor seems to be more critical than that of the high school counselor.

Modifications of PALS activities, methodologies, and guidelines for local situations seem inevitable. The comment was made over and over that PALS is needed in all communities. The building of bridges between school buildings and the building of bridges to the community is too critical to leave any communities out. One modification of note is that these programs are not limiting PALS to grades four through six, but instead are working with students from pre-kindergarten (four years old) through sixth grade. The consensus; however, was that PALS would not work with students in grades higher than sixth. Every elementary administrator and teacher commented that if more high school students could be found as mentors there were plenty more elementary students who need them.

PALS is a self-esteem booster. The effect on mentor and mentee carries over for several days. The general consensus was that PALS improved student's outlook on school and desire to do better; however, no one at the schools had kept data to determine if statistically grades, attendance, and such improved. Anecdotally, people at each site were able to relate success stories of mentors and mentees for whom PALS did make a difference in grades, attendance, and outlook towards school.

The mentor/mentee relationship is a powerful one. The comment was made that it "gives energy to both mentor and mentee." Because of this the suggestion was made that PALS be continued throughout the summer and if possible multi-year. The mentees may have already had experiences with people they looked up to leaving them, so the PALS relationship does not need to add to this. At a minimum, mentors should mail cards and letters to their mentee during the summer. With today's transitional society, mentors and mentees should be prepared ahead of time if the other has to leave during the middle of the school year. At one site, one mentor had to change mentees three times during the school year because of the mentees moving out of the community.

The rewards students receive for PALS are primarily altruistic and internal in nature. All sites agreed that PALS does not need an award system similar to a career development event or other "traditional" FFA programs. Agriculture teachers were concerned that PALS was another worthwhile program that added to the teachers workload. They suggested that Food For America and Building Our American Communities concepts be incorporated into PALS. Although recognition programs for both of these have been phased out, many if not virtually all chapters still conduct activities related to these programs. PALS may contribute to an increase in student volunteerism, but all interviewed said that it was too early in the program to state for certain. Almost all of the agriculture teachers stated that PALS had increased their enrollments immediately and should help in the future as mentees move into high school. The immediate enrollment/FFA membership increase was attributed to the excitement and positive image that PALS had. PALS tended to attract more non-traditional students to take agriculture courses.

The upper limit of mentor/mentee pairs that one agriculture teacher can supervise seems to be 50 pairs if the pairs visit frequently. Additional mentees can be

served by infrequent mentor visits and special projects that involve entire classes rather than individuals.

The training materials from National FFA were highly praised. Especially, the local teams were complementary of the mentor training portion. The videotapes did not receive as high a praise. Many in the interviews stated that additional materials were needed which address the issues of answering administrations questions, concerns about liability, providing templates for permission letters, addressing confidentiality, etc.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions and recommendations for this evaluation are presented by objective. Because of the low response rate, care must be taken when generalizing the findings of the quantitative surveys beyond the population for which the sample is truly representative. Likewise, findings from the qualitative site visits may not be transferable to sites and situations different from those observed. Given the preceding cautions, readers may reasonably transfer the recommendations to other PALS programs that are similar to the student, school, and community demographics from this evaluation.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Objective One

Objective one was to determine if high school and elementary school students are more likely to be retained in school after having participated in PALS. From the findings it can be concluded that:

1. Mentors were neutral in whether PALS helped improve their attitude toward school; however, they were in agreement to strong agreement that staying in school is important.

2. Parents of mentors were also neutral in whether PALS helped improve their child's attitude toward school and were neutral that PALS helped

in keeping their child in school. They strongly agreed that they tell their child that staying in school is important.

3. The parents of mentees were unsure whether PALS improved their child's attitude toward school; however, they were in agreement that PALS helped their child stay in school. They also agreed that PALS helped their child improve in reading, writing, mathematics, and social skills.

4. The counselors and teachers of both mentors and mentees thought that PALS helped approximately half of the students in their attitude toward school.

5. From the qualitative interviews, it can be concluded that PALS does make a difference in attitude and outlook toward school and staying in school, especially for the mentees. It appears that mentors who are at-risk for dropping out of school are either not selected for PALS participation or self-select not to participate; therefore, PALS may not be having much of an effect on the high school students simply because they would complete high school anyway. On an individual basis, PALS has made a difference for many students; however, detailed statistics have not been kept by participating programs to determine the magnitude of the effect of PALS on staying in school.

The following recommendations are made based upon the above conclusions:

1. FFA chapters participating in PALS should continue to emphasize academic mentoring for the mentees. PALS activities should contain learning experiences in mathematics, reading, writing, and social skills. For the mentors, PALS seems to be an excellent hands-on SAE for future elementary teachers and those interested in psychology. This information should be utilized for recruitment purposes.

2. The national PALS staff should continue to work on an activities handbook which emphasizes learning academic and social skills through agriculture. The staff should explore "Agriculture in the Classroom" materials to determine which, if any, of those would be appropriate for PALS activities.

3. To obtain a definitive answer on whether PALS makes a difference in retention and other academic indicators, a longitudinal study would have to be conducted. The logistics of such a study may make this impractical.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Objective Two

Objective two was to determine specific leadership skills that are learned/acquired by the high school and elementary school students as a result of PALS. From the findings it can be concluded that:

1. Mentors helped their mentees by caring, listening, assisting, and being a good role model. They also believed that PALS had helped them in working with children and their peers. They were neutral in believing they needed more training; therefore, it can be concluded that PALS did help the mentors in leadership, listening, and human development skills.

2. Parents of mentors agreed that PALS had helped their child in leadership, listening, and human development skills.

3. Parents of mentees also agreed that PALS had helped their child in the areas of leadership, listening, and human development skills.

4. The teachers and counselors of both mentors and mentees agreed that PALS had helped the students in leadership, listening, and human development skills. However, they thought that approximately half of the students needed more training in these areas.

5. From the qualitative interviews, it can be concluded that the mentors do assume a leadership role for the mentees. Time after time anecdotes were shared in which mentees looked up to and almost idolized the mentors.

6. The mentors had learned or acquired the leadership skills of being a role model, making decisions based upon listening and questioning, and leading without being a dictator.

The following recommendations are made based upon the above conclusions:

1. Because the mentoring relationship is a strong one, it is recommended that the mentoring be continued throughout the summer and if possible over multiple years. At a minimum, mentors should keep in contact with their mentees over the summer through mail or telephone.

2. Leadership, communication, and human development training should be conducted for the mentors throughout the mentoring experience, not just at the beginning of the school year. Mentors should be encouraged to analyze situations in order to improve their skills. Mentors should be trained in how to build these skills in their mentees. The FFA advisor/agriculture teacher is the ideal person to conduct the training sessions.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Objective Three

Objective three was to determine the degree of school administrative, staff, and community support of the PALS program. From the findings it can be concluded that:

1. PALS receives strong support from school administration, staff, and other teachers.

2. Teachers and counselors involved with PALS said that some community members were involved with PALS.

3. From the qualitative interviews, it can be concluded that administration and community support are critical, and for the sites visited, both gave strong support to PALS. However, direct school administration and community involvement does not appear to be critical for success. Support and

involvement of the agriculture teacher, elementary guidance counselors, and elementary teachers are critical for success.

The following recommendations are made based upon the above conclusions:

1. Agriculture teachers wishing to start or continue a PALS program must obtain school administration approval and support.

2. Agriculture teachers wishing to start or continue a PALS program should obtain community support through public relations efforts, parent-teacher contacts, and informational meetings. National PALS staff should continue to encourage community involvement for Local PALS Teams, but should not require active involvement.

3. Agriculture teachers wishing to start or continue a PALS program must contact guidance counselors and elementary teachers early in the process and must obtain their commitment to be actively involved.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Objective Four

Objective four was to evaluate the impact the PALS program has in the local community. From the findings it can be concluded that:

1. Mentors were neutral in whether PALS improved their attitude toward work and home; however, they agreed that their parents were supportive of them being a PAL.

2. Parents of mentors were neutral in whether PALS improved their child's attitude toward work and home; however, they agreed that PALS had influenced their child setting work goals.

3. Parents of mentees were in slight agreement that PALS improved their child's attitude toward work and home.

4. Counselors and teachers thought that PALS improved the attitude toward home of a few students and thought PALS helped the attitude of some toward work.

5. From the qualitative interviews, it can be concluded that PALS is needed in all communities regardless of size or demographics. From the administrators' interviews it is evident that all communities have problems that programs such as PALS can help alleviate. The statement repeated over and over again by administrators, counselors, and elementary teachers was that they wished there were more high school students available to be mentors. In other words, there is an unmet need for students and others to mentor elementary students.

6. From the qualitative interviews, it can be concluded that PALS contributes to a sense of volunteerism and either works to encourage other groups to volunteer in the school system or supports efforts already in action.

7. From the qualitative interviews, it can be concluded that PALS encourages parents to become more aware of what happens in school and to interact more closely with teachers.

8. PALS can be a vital component of a "Service Learning" program or can meet the community service requirement that some systems have for high school graduation.

The following recommendations are made based upon the above conclusions:

1. Many factors influence a child's attitude toward home and work. PALS may help improve attitudes, but it is not able by itself to overcome other stronger factors. Therefore, this should still be a goal of PALS but Local PALS Teams and mentors should be informed of the other factors that affect this area.

2. PALS programs should be encouraged for all communities regardless of size, location, or demographics. Possibly the concepts from the Building Our American Communities and Food For America programs could be infused into PALS. This would encourage PALS participants to go outside of the school walls and into the communities.

3. PALS is only one of many programs that encourage mentoring in elementary schools; however, PALS appears to be unique in its use of cross-age student mentoring. Local PALS programs should coordinate efforts with other school volunteers to include parents, retirees, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Adopt-a-School programs, and others. One of the hopes for the future is that PALS will teach both mentors and mentees to be life-long volunteers.

4. On a regular basis, local PALS programs should involve mentor and mentee parents in socials, meetings, informative programs, and other activities.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Objective Five

Objective five was to identify the types of activities used in weekly mentor/mentee sessions; do agricultural-based activities accomplish the program goals of PALS? From the qualitative site visit findings and from telephone contacts with the quantitative sample it can be concluded that:

1. PALS programs are as varied as there are numbers of participating FFA chapters. Mentor/mentee sessions occur from several times a week to weekly to every other week to monthly to infrequently. Session topics consist of PALS activities, school subjects, skill and team building, agricultural awareness, and specific subjects such as environmental education. The number of mentor/mentee pairs in a local PALS program ranges from a few pairs to more than 50 pairs. In some cases, the PALS session is conducted as a high school agriculture class interacting with one or more elementary classes.

Mentee grades ranged from kindergarten to sixth grade. Mentors ranged from ninth graders to twelfth graders. In some schools, PALS is a regular course for which the high school students complete assignments and receive a grade.

2. Regardless of the logistics of the local PALS program, the agricultural education tenets of "learning by doing," "learning academic subjects through agricultural examples," "problem solving," and "building self-worth and self-esteem through participation" are being used and are successful in meeting the goals of PALS.

The following recommendations are made based upon the above conclusions:

1. One-on-one mentoring is critical to accomplishing all of the PALS program goals. Local teams should pair mentors and mentees and try to keep them together for at least the school year and longer if possible.

2. Agriculture teachers, especially those starting PALS for the first time or those who are first year teachers, should be cautious about having too many mentor/mentee pairs. The time, effort, and paperwork required for more than 10 - 30 pairs multiplies greatly which can lead to a less than successful PALS experience, problems in school time management, and/or loss of personal time outside of school.

3. Local PALS teams should conduct PALS activities that support local program goals and objectives. Regardless of local goals and objectives, PALS programs should utilize agricultural-based activities whenever possible and should utilize agricultural education tenets when applicable.

4. Mentors should be FFA members in grades nine through twelve. Mentees should be in grades pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. All evaluation participants agreed that seventh and eighth graders are too close to

elementary school age to be mentors and too close to high school age to be mentees.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Objective Six

Objective six was to reduce risk factors in the community and school associated with adolescent problem behavior (delinquency, school drop out, alcohol, etc.). From the findings it can be concluded that:

1. Many factors influence adolescent problem behavior. PALS may help in reducing such behavior, but by itself it is not able to overcome other stronger factors.

2. Mentors were neutral in whether their school attendance, self discipline, and behavior at home had improved since PALS. It cannot be determined whether PALS had no influence or mentors believed they were doing well in these areas already.

3. Parents of mentors were neutral in whether their child's school attendance, self discipline, and behavior at home had improved since PALS. It cannot be determined whether PALS had no influence or parents of mentors believed the mentors were doing well in these areas already.

4. Parents of mentees were neutral to slightly in agreement that their child's school attendance, self discipline, and behavior at home had improved since PALS.

5. Counselors and teachers thought that about half of the students had improved their school attendance since PALS, thought that most students had improved their self discipline since PALS, and thought that few parents reported improved behavior at home since PALS. It cannot be determined whether PALS had little influence or parents did not report on their child's behavior to the teachers and counselors.

6. From the qualitative interviews, it can be concluded that the mentors feel an obligation to uphold high moral and social values because mentees are looking up to them. In addition, several stories were told of mentees who improved their social behavior because they did not want to disappoint their mentor.

The following recommendations are made based upon the above conclusions:

1. PALS may help reduce risk factors, but by itself it is not able to overcome other stronger factors. Therefore, this should still be a goal of PALS but Local PALS Teams and mentors should be informed of the other factors that affect this area.

2. Wanting to meet the high expectations of others can be a strong motivator. Local PALS programs should encourage participants to maintain high moral, ethical, and social values. Mentors should be trained on how to handle having mentees look up to them and expect them to hold and act with high standards. Mentors and mentees should be made aware of how to deal with disappointment when the other does not live up to expectations.

3. PALS can be a strong force for positive behavior. Local PALS teams should be encouraged to publicize successes of positive activities and results.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Objective Seven

Objective seven was to determine the longevity of PALS in participating chapters. From the findings it can be concluded that:

1. An accurate count of FFA chapters participating in PALS needs to be conducted. The national PALS staff knows how many PALS Training Manuals have been sent to chapters; however, in telephone calls the researcher found that chapters received the materials but never used them.

2. Changes in agricultural education teaching staff, school administration, counselor staff, or elementary teachers keeps programs from continuing PALS from one year to the next.

3. Local programs wanting to start a PALS program are stymied by concerns of liability, transportation problems, logistics of conflicting class schedules between the high school and elementary school, and lack of time.

4. The mentoring experience is too strong and too important to be left to chance. Mentors must receive adequate training and teachers must be committed to the program.

5. From the qualitative site visits, longevity of PALS participation is dependent upon the dedication of the agriculture teacher and the ability of the Local PALS Team to adjust to changing situations.

6. From the qualitative site visits, scheduling and travel seem to be the biggest hindrances to PALS program continuation.

The following recommendations are made based upon the above conclusions:

1. To be successful, PALS must have coordination from the National FFA Organization staff. This coordination should come from a person or team that has most or all of its time allocated to the PALS program and other community and human development programs.

2. Because proper training is essential, National FFA should conduct "Train the Trainer" sessions, then require agriculture teachers wanting to start a PALS program to attend a training session before receiving the PALS materials. Another option would be to combine PALS training with Made for Excellence (MFE) workshops. PALS workshops at the National FFA Convention were successful in encouraging chapters to start PALS programs. These workshops should be continued and hopefully expanded.

3. A reporting system for PALS participation should be developed. This system should be constructed for ease of use and conservation of teacher time. It could be incorporated into existing National FFA reporting systems such as chapter rosters or National Chapter Program forms. PALS should be included in the next revision of National FFA publications such as FFA Student Handbook and National Chapter Award Handbook.

4. The materials from National FFA were judged as good and helpful, especially the mentor training portions. The videotapes should be updated and revisions made to the remainder of the training materials. One suggestion is to make a video which is more high school student oriented. This should include students talking about PALS and shots of PALS activities and students doing things rather than just "talking heads." If not already completed at the time of this report, the New Activities Handbook should be completed and made available for distribution with the other training materials. Additional helps should be developed including sample form letters to school administration and school boards, a question and answer sheet on liability of PALS activities, and a handbook on how to infuse PALS into various school situations (block schedule, schools on different time schedules, transporting students when elementary and high schools are not located near each other, year-round schools, continuing PALS during the summer, etc.).

5. Continued local success in the PALS program is dependent upon adapting to change. Local PALS Teams must conduct formative evaluations throughout the school year and a summative evaluation at the end of each school year.

6. A dedicated PALS class seems to help alleviate some scheduling and travel problems. In some schools this class was called PALS and students received a grade and credit. In other schools it was an agricultural education

course for which PALS was a part. The National FFA Organization, The Council, or another agricultural education group should consider developing curriculum materials for a PALS course. These materials should include course and unit objectives; suggested activities; suggested resources; unit and/or lesson outlines, handout masters, transparency masters, and evaluations; and other curricular resources.

CHAPTER 2 SURVEY WRITTEN COMMENTS

Tables 6 through 8 contain the written comments from the mentor, parent, and teacher surveys. Responses that were similar were combined into common statements.

Table 6. Written Comments from Mentor Surveys

What do you like best about PALS?	
Response	n *
Helping my pal with problems	33
Making a new friend	13
Opportunity to be a positive role model	13
Spending time with my pal	12
Positive feelings from helping pal	10
Activities done with pals	7
Learning from my pal	7
Brightening my pal's day	6
Experience of working with a younger individual	6
Talking with pal	6
Fun to be with pal	5
Meeting new people	4
Improved patience, responsibility, and social skills	2
Nothing	2
Being able to work with the mentally handicapped	1

What parts of PALS need to be improved and what should be changed?	
Response	n *
OK as is	41
More time to spend with pals	21
Increased amount of activities	9
A better set time to have PALS activities (not during class time)	3
Improve way of matching mentor with mentee	2
Increase size of project	2
More large group activities	2
More one on one activities	2
Greater awareness of PALS Program	1
Improved activities during meetings (more exciting)	1
List of possible activities to do with pals	1
More training for mentors	1
Mentees need to learn that the session is a special time, not just for "skipping school"	1

* n = those respondents who made the comment

Table 7. Written Comments from Parent Surveys

What are the most positive aspects of PALS?	
Response	n *
Positive interaction between mentor and mentee	17
Mentor is a positive role-model	16
Improved school work	14
Having a friend to do things that they both like to do	11
Responsibility for mentor	8
Self-esteem/ self-worth for mentor/mentee increased	8
Help mentee grow to become a good person (improves social skills)	6
Teaches older kids how to help and be patience with younger kids	6
Child is more willing to learn (likes school more)	5
Better behavior	2
Child looked forward to visits with pal	2
Child more willing to please	2
Children have a chance to help	2
Compassion toward others with less opportunity	2
Encouragement for mentee	2
Makes mentee feel wanted and loved	2
Mentors gained an understanding of special needs students	2
Children work to attain their goals	1

What parts of PALS need to be improved and what should be changed?	
Response	n *
No recommendations	36
Spend more time together	10
Expand the program to interact with the students during the day	9
More parental involvement and communication	5
Each child in the class should receive a pal	1
Increase amount of time spent on academics	1
Increased group activities with all the PALS members	1
Increased one-on-one interaction between mentor and mentee	1
Mentor should help tutor the child if needed	1
Mentors should be better prepared to handle a variety of situations or issues	1
Program use 8th grade students as mentors	1
Student should have the choice of staying with the same PAL the next year or having someone else assigned	1
Think it is important for each to possibly go to each others homes so that each has an idea of where their thoughts and values come from, so they can build on each others strengths and weaknesses	1

* n = those respondents who made the comment

Table 8. Written Comments from Teacher/Counselor Surveys

What are the most positive aspects of PALS? Response	n *
Positive relationships between students	6
Positive role model for younger students	5
Improves self-esteem for both mentor and mentee	3
Teaches mentors responsibility	3
Developed a better understanding for those not as fortunate	2
Developed social skills for both mentor and mentee	2
Gives younger student something to look forward to in high school	2
Public relations with the community	2
Removal from negative environment	2
Broadens horizons	1
Elementary students found the importance of good grades	1
Elementary students found the importance of staying in school	1
Gives encouragement	1
Staff communication	1
Teaches discipline to the mentors	1

What parts of PALS need to be improved and what should be changed? Response	n *
More training in communication skills	5
Spend more time together	4
Greater community involvement	3
Increased funding from national	2
Leadership training for high school students	2
Local groups need to inform everyone involved better	2
More training for discipline problems	2
None	2
Improved activities	1
Improved organization of curriculum materials	1
More PALS activities suggestions	1

* n = those respondents who made the comment

CHAPTER 3 SITE VISITS REPORT

CENTRAL REGION CASE STUDY *

Central Region School is located in a town of about 1,700 people surrounded by a rural community. The school and community have very little ethnic diversity. The community is becoming more residential because it is becoming a bedroom community for a neighboring town that is growing. Central Region has grades pre-kindergarten through 12 in the same building that occupies three town blocks. The school has approximately 900 students with an average graduating class of 50 to 80 students. Central has eight class periods per day and most high school students take eight subjects. The school boasts satellite and interactive television linkages and through these offers instruction in five foreign languages. The agriculture department has one teacher, a greenhouse, a classroom, and office and storage space. Scattered throughout the classroom are computers, fish, plants, gerbils, and posters. The agriculture teacher is a member of the local Chamber of Commerce.

The PALS program at Central has been in existence for three years. It pairs mentors one-on-one with mentees. The first two years the program was limited to seniors as mentors and had 17 and 25 pairs respectively. This year the program was expanded to sophomores and juniors and had 50 pairs. Mentors must schedule at least one-half hour per week during school with their mentee. The in-school activities consist of helping and tutoring with subjects such as mathematics, talking and listening, and structured PALS activities. Most pairs also get together outside of school for social activities such as going to the mall, recreational activities such as ball games, or other activities such as talking on the telephone. Once a month a PALS mentor meeting is held. At this lunch meeting mentors discuss events, activities, and concerns. Some mentors are assigned to be PALS Project Team Leaders and it is their duty to assist the mentoring pairs assigned to them. Mentors must have their "laser-printed label" to meet with their mentee. The label has both students' names and the date and time of

the meeting. Each elementary teacher also has a sign-in notebook with planned meeting date/time and actual date/time. Mentees can be in any grade kindergarten through sixth. On a regular basis, the elementary guidance counselor meets with teams of mentees, such as all first grade mentees, to discuss concerns and questions regarding PALS.

Selected Comments from Interviews

The PALS program at Central began as one of the pilot sites in their state. The agriculture teacher has remained supportive of the program throughout the three years; however, the local team has changed over time. The first year there were community members on the team and duties were divided up among team members. As people left the team, they were not replaced; therefore, the current local team is made up of the agriculture teacher, elementary guidance counselor, and elementary/junior high principal. The agriculture teacher has taken on more of the mentor training because of this change in local team makeup. The site experimented the second year with setting standards, such as grade point average and attendance, for students to be mentors. Seven mentors ended up getting "cut" which resulted in bad relationships with those mentors for the remainder of the school year. The standards were deemed a total failure and were not kept for this year. Mentors still have to meet program requirements; however, there are no entrance requirements other than desire and motivation to be a mentor.

The agriculture teacher thought the PALS Workshops at National FFA Convention were a good idea. This past year the elementary principal attended and thought they were great. The mentor training section of the notebook has been a valuable tool as have the PALS suggested activities. The agriculture teacher utilized the "Introduction to PALS" video extensively; however, did not have time to use the other videos. One logistical problem is in doing large group activities with 100 students.

The agriculture teacher thought that PALS was a help for the mentors. "PALS makes students feel important." He stated that mentors are more grateful for their own advantages because of PALS. PALS has helped his FFA membership because this year all mentors are required to be FFA members. Before this, mentors had to be an FFA member or an agriculture student. One success story he related was of a football player who was a mentor. His mentee looked up to him and said he wanted to play football and wear his mentor's number when he got into high school. Another story was of a mentee who would not talk to anyone--even the teacher in class. Over the course of the school year, the mentor was able to get the mentee to talk to her and to even start talking in class some.

The high school principal and guidance counselor like PALS. "PALS is a win/win program." "[It] gives as much back to the older student as it does to the younger student." PALS helps build positive rapport and teaches caring, values, and virtues. The guidance counselor stated that the success of PALS is measured on an "individual by individual basis." The elementary/junior high principal and elementary guidance counselor also praised the program. "I wish every kid could have a mentor." "Kids have been dumped on, so, PALS is much needed." Looking back, the principal noted that there were some rough spots during the first year that have since been cleared up. The biggest problem that year was mentors not showing up for meetings with their mentees. The guidance counselor noted that for many students having a pal has steered them toward positive alternatives. She related one success story of how a mentor took a Christmas tree to the mentee and then helped decorate it. A word of caution is that PALS is a lot of work. "[The planning team and the mentors especially] need to guard against disappointing the little kids."

EASTERN REGION CASE STUDY *

Eastern Region High School is located outside of a town with a small college surrounded by a rural community. The community has a wide diversity in cultures

such as Old Order Mennonites and Eastern European immigrants, is a strong agricultural community, and is located near two larger communities. Eastern Region H.S. has grades 9 through 12 and the cooperating elementary school is pre-kindergarten (age four) through fifth grade. The high school has approximately 950 students and the elementary school has almost 300 students. The agriculture department has three teachers, a greenhouse, classrooms, an agricultural mechanics laboratory, and office and storage space. The agriculture program works very closely with the town council. Only one of the three teachers is involved with PALS because he is the one who teaches the leadership courses in which PALS is a part.

The PALS program at Eastern has been in existence for two years. The first year the high school classes met with entire fourth grade classes. This year, the program had 45 pairs of mentors one-on-one with mentees. Eastern is on the block schedule with 94 minutes available for the mentors to travel and work with their mentee. Mentors travel by school bus once every two weeks to the elementary school. The in-school activities consist of helping and tutoring with subjects such as mathematics, talking and listening, and structured PALS activities such as a farm tour, tee shirt painting, and making a picture out of beans. Mentees can be in any grade pre-kindergarten through fifth. Mentors wear a student-designed tag which identifies them as a PAL and admits them into the elementary school.

Selected Comments from Interviews

The PALS program at Eastern began two years ago because of some FFA members attending the PALS Workshop at the National FFA Convention. The agriculture teacher thought the workshop was wonderful, especially bringing in the Kansas City elementary students. He thought that the workshop should be continued and expanded with more time and room for high school students to interact with each other and with the elementary students. His first step in establishing a PALS program was to talk to the principal and get support. It is critical, he stated, that the agriculture

teacher have contacts in the elementary school(s). The next step was to highly publicize the first PALS activity making sure that both the high school and the elementary school received recognition.

The agriculture teacher liked the PALS notebooks, especially the mentor training section and the icebreakers. He stated that it was difficult to get other teachers and administrators to watch the videotapes as suggested because of time constraints. This was also a reason for not actively involving a community member on the planning team. He suggested that another videotape directed at the high school students would be helpful. Its theme should be the importance of the PALS program and how it can impact the lives of young children. The video should include high school students who have done PALS talking about their impressions and the activities that they have done. It should show lots of activities, so it could be used as a brainstorming tool.

He stated that PALS is an excellent recruitment tool both now and in the future. "PALS is a hands-on SAE for high school students wanting to enter elementary education. " "The linkage with the elementary school makes a difference for future agriculture enrollments."

The high school principal and guidance counselor praised the impact that PALS has on the mentors. "When kids do more than just come to school, they become more well-rounded." "[PALS] is a chance to give something back." "[PALS] teaches the student to be less self-interested--more altruistic." The hope is that programs such as PALS that are active in this school system create a "cycle of giving back." An interesting note about Eastern Region H.S. is that several clubs have a community service requirement for membership and PALS participation can count towards meeting that requirement.

Eastern Region Elementary School has an established volunteer/community involvement program. On any given week there may be upwards of 150 volunteers at the school. The school has developed four levels of business-education partnerships:

level one is where partners provide leadership, training, and access; level two is where partners provide an exchange of services; level three is where partners provide rewards to students for defined levels of performance; and level four is where partners contribute for a designated purpose. Because of all of this involvement, PALS is a natural fit to what is already happening. PALS is unique in its cross-age mentoring concept. The principal commented that pride and ownership of the school by parents and community members is enhanced by PALS and other similar programs. The principal believes that individual success comes from having an advocate (one who pulls for you, listens to you, supports you) and that the advocate can be a parent or any other person. The principal shared a story of a student who was having a rough year both in and out of school. This student's pal has helped turn the student around and given "a new lease on at least one aspect of life."

The elementary PALS coordinators think that PALS is great. Each PALS day the PALS banner is put up in the school's entryway. Students ask their teachers for days before and days after when the next PALS day is going to be. They noted that many mentees see PALS as a special occasion and dress extra nice for PALS day. They related two success stories. The first was about a mentee who had received in-school-suspension for fighting. One of the suspension days happened to be on a PALS day, so the mentee was not able to participate. Later that day the mentor came back and talked with the elementary PALS coordinator and was concerned about the mentee. The mentor wanted to share with the mentee an experience with fighting he had in the sixth grade and that fighting was not the way to go. The mentor had taken off work and missed getting paid to "just touch base with my mentee." The second story was about a four-year old mentee who wanted to make sure that the mentor's name was put on a friendship chain that was being made.

The elementary teachers with mentees in their classrooms responded to a site-administered questionnaire. Listed are a few of their comments:

* Mentee comes more because they hope it is PALS day.
* Two of the three have shown positive growth in classroom behavior, attention to classwork, and self-concept.
* The mentors seem to really care about the students.
* Mentees feel good about having a special friend.
* Everyone else wants to know why they don't have a PAL.
* The biggest disadvantage is scheduling. It's hard to keep students on track when they miss class.

The mentors responded to a site-administered questionnaire. Listed are a few of their comments:

* You know you are a big friend to someone and they really look up to you.
* Feel good about making a difference.
* Gives you a different view if you do not have brothers or sisters.
* Some mentors don't "fit" their mentee and vice versa.
* Can't do too much outside of school with them.
* It is sad when hearing about some of the mentee's bad home life.
* Need to have summer activities and more group activities.
* Have weekend or afternoon things to do.

SOUTHERN REGION CASE STUDY *

Southern Region High School is located in a small town surrounded by a rural community with approximately 15,000 people in the county. The community is a mixture of farming and industry. The ethnic breakdown is approximately 60% White with the largest minority being African American (Black). Southern Region High School has grades 9 through 12, a middle school has grades 6 through 8, an elementary school is grades 3 through 5, and the primary school is pre-kindergarten through grade 2. The agriculture department has one teacher, a greenhouse, a classroom, an agricultural mechanics laboratory, a pond and land laboratory, and office and storage space. The agriculture teacher is a member of the local Chamber of Commerce.

The agriculture department at Southern has been involved in environmental activities with primary and elementary students for about six years. The PALS program fit nicely into this structure, so last year the environmental science class of 18 students paired up with elementary students. This year the environmental class is working with two second grade classrooms. Southern has 50 minute class periods, so it is extremely helpful that the primary school is in walking distance from the high school. An interesting note is that the high school gifted and talented class also assists with the programs.

Selected Comments from Interviews

Activities with younger students started about six years ago when the high school had a recycling center and school pond and the agriculture teacher wanted to teach some environmental awareness to these students. Last year the PALS program paired up college-bound agriculture students with at-risk elementary students. They met for activities in the afternoon every other week. This schedule worked well because it was when the agriculture class met and the elementary students were in a recess period. This year the agriculture class was taught in the morning, so PALS could not be continued as in the previous year. The Gifted and Talented teacher was involved in an "adopt-a-school" program which was a perfect tie-in with PALS. Sometimes the primary students come to the high school and sometimes the high school students present work stations at the primary school. Each session begins with an introduction. Then there are several work stations that primary students rotate between. Finally, the group is brought back together for a summary and debriefing.

The agriculture teacher stated, "PALS brings out the best in the high school students." Many times students who are not the typical leaders shine in a setting like PALS. The biggest problem the first year was in transportation. Out-of-school activities were also a problem because of the high school students being involved in so many other activities. The biggest pluses of PALS were the positive publicity and the

chance for high school students to interact with younger students. Also, involvement in PALS may encourage some students to enter the teaching profession. The two biggest factors in longevity of a PALS program are the commitment of the agriculture teacher and finding someone at the other school who is willing to work on PALS.

The high school counselor and the gifted and talented teacher thought that PALS was a positive for the high school. Amid all the negatives that are heard about high schools nationwide, PALS is something good. PALS works both ways: it helps the elementary students see what high school students do and it teaches the high school students leadership skills and the attitude that they can contribute to society. PALS may help open career avenues in agriculture for some students. Two of the big pluses of PALS is that it builds leadership and emphasizes community service. The gifted and talented teacher commented that this program is good because it forces the high school students to go into the application and synthesis of information in order for them to teach it. She also thought that adaptation of the PALS program is good and that you must make the program fit your situation.

The elementary assistant principal who was involved in the PALS program two years ago loved PALS. An indication of how well PALS was liked is that the teachers the next year wanted to know why PALS was not being conducted. "The mentees were devastated if a PALS session was missed [because of scheduling problems or such]. We had to reschedule the session." She thought that the students who were mentees could benefit from having a role model and that the high school students selected to be mentors were excellent role models. The mentees wanted to impress the mentors and make them feel proud. The only concern was scheduling and the fact that PALS could not be continued this year. One interesting note is that the assistant principal commented on how much the community is involved in the school. More than 1,300 hours of parent volunteer time were donated this past year.

The primary school principal stated that the second graders looked up to the high school students. He likes that students go back and forth using resources and people from all schools. His only concern was that only two of the twelve second grade classrooms were receiving the benefits of PALS. If the program continues, which he hopes it does, he wants all of the classes to receive the environmental instruction so that the curriculum is consistent for all students. A primary teacher who was interviewed said, "One of the most positive [parts of PALS] is the peer relationships that children have developed between older and younger. They have become friends." Another positive is the academics. The mentors have had to learn how to adjust material to fit the teaching time and the mentees have had to learn to respect authority from teenagers. The mentors have become good role models. The male mentors provide a positive male figure for mentees without fathers living at home. Also, all of the mentors teach and exhibit proper etiquette, mannerisms, speech, dress, and such.

The second graders also take what they have learned and apply it. They have a project where they read to kindergarten students. The second grade teacher is able to relate this back to what the PALS mentors do with them. The second graders keep a journal and write in it their PALS experiences. This is important for carryover from one PALS session to the next. Even as young as age eight some of the students say things such as I'm going to quit school. PALS mentors are able to make these students set goals such as graduating from high school. The primary teacher hoped these goals help keep these students in school.

WESTERN REGION CASE STUDY *

Western Region High School is located in an affluent urban community (one person estimated that the average annual household income was $60,000). However, there is wide socio-economic status diversity in the community. There is everything from government subsidized housing to large estates. The community is primarily

White with Hispanics being the largest minority group. Western Region High School has more than 2,900 students in grades 9 through 12. The cooperating elementary school has been the same one for the past four years. It has about 800 students in pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. The agriculture department has two teachers, classrooms, a large laboratory, and office and storage space. Only one of the two teachers is involved with PALS because she is the one who teaches the PALS course.

The PALS program at Western has been in existence for four years. It was one of nine or ten pilot programs in its state (the agriculture teacher thought that three other of the pilots sites were still active). Western is on a 90 minute block schedule, with the PALS class being one of a few 45 minute classes offered. The mentors are mostly juniors and seniors and the mentees are in grades two through four. Mentors travel by bus once per week to the elementary school. One week the session is a PALS activity and the next it is a tutoring session. This year there are 11 pairs. Mentees are selected in the second grade and may continue for three years if needed. Mentees who improve or mentees who have not progressed after two years do not continue so that additional at-risk second graders can have a pal.

Selected Comments from Interviews

The PALS program at Western started four years ago as the result of the agriculture teacher seeing a promotional flyer for the Project PALS pilot schools grant. She applied for the grant and became one of the pilot programs in her state. The first year was the toughest. They had to put together the local team, decide on logistics, and work on activities. The team has stayed essentially the same except the elementary guidance counselor changed after the first year and after the second year the community member was dropped. Mentors are selected based on an interview. Mentors are questioned about their dependability, responsibility, and maturity. Mentors are usually just for one year because the PALS class can only be taken once

for credit. Some students do take it a second time without receiving credit because they feel so committed to the program.

The agriculture teacher utilized the PALS materials, but had some suggestions for improvement. First, she stated that the notebook had too much material. Everything needs to be looked at and those things that are not relevant to the PALS program should be eliminated. She used the videos both with her mentors and with the elementary teachers and liked the suggested activities. One point lacking is a section on confidentiality. This section should address the issue of when a mentor should tell something that a mentee has said.

She thought that PALS was a positive for the Western agriculture department. It has changed the image of agricultural education in the minds of administrators, guidance counselors, and students. It has created an excitement for FFA and increased membership because a mentor must be an FFA member. She can see an impact on the school because students that she does not know come in asking how to become a PAL. She thinks that PALS is excellent training for anyone entering elementary education or psychology. PALS changes attitudes and behaviors. She gave two success stories. The first was about a mentee who had been home schooled until the second or third grade. The mentor helped with social skills and working in large groups. The second story occurred that day I visited. A mentor was ill and came to school just because he did not want to disappoint his mentee. The agriculture teacher believed that to do PALS it must be done well. "PALS must be taken seriously because the little kids take it seriously." Finally, she believed that agriculture teachers must receive PALS training before starting a PALS program.

The high school associate principals also thought that PALS had changed people's image of agriculture and agricultural education. The mentors have influenced the students around them. They see that the program promotes positive leadership and positive role models. Many schools are now looking at requiring community service as

a graduation requirement and PALS is a natural for meeting this requirement. The only concerns with the program are transportation cost and travel time. One comment was that the "'doors' at the elementary school must be opened by administration or teachers for PALS to work." The agriculture teacher must be committed and think that PALS is worthwhile.

The Western Region Elementary School selected mentees based on at-riskness. Selection criteria include students who have failed one or more portions of the state test, who have been retained in a grade, are from a low SES family, or a very dysfunctional family. The assistant principal thought that PALS had been a positive influence on mentees because it gave them someone to share things with. Mentees have shown an increase in self-esteem and improved attitude toward school. The elementary counselor stated "[PALS is] definitely an impact on self-esteem! Not as much on grades." She thought that PALS was not able to address the serious academic problems that some mentees have. An elementary teacher commented, "Kids are lacking so much, it's hard to make up ground." She did think that PALS improved self-esteem and attitude toward school. She thought that mentees were never absent on PALS day; however, she wasn't sure that the effect continue throughout the week. The biggest concern of all was how to get more high school students involved. The only other concern the elementary teacher had was that the mentees had to miss class once per week.

* Names and identifying characteristics have been changed to protect privacy.

APPENDIX A SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

PROJECT

PALS

For those who care!

Mentor Survey

The National FFA Organization is conducting an evaluation of Project Pals. Your Project Pals program has been selected at random to participate in this study. Your answers are very important because you represent many other mentors across the United States.

INSTRUCTIONS:

By answering this survey, you provide information to help us improve Project Pals. Please use a #2 pencil to "bubble" the responses on the attached "scantron" form. Please be sure to completely fill in the appropriate response "bubbles" to ensure accurate electronic tabulation. **Please do not fold or alter the scantron form.** Thank you for your help!

REQUESTED INFORMATION:

The "Name," "Section," and "Student Identification Number" sections on the scantron form are being used to code each form to ensure that your responses are completely anonymous. You do not need to bubble in these sections.

1. My gender is
   - A. Male
   - B. Female

2. My grade/class in School is
   - A. 9
   - B. 10
   - C. 11
   - D. 12

3. I consider myself as a(n)
   - A. African American (Black)
   - B. American Indian (Native American)
   - C. Asian American or Pacific Islander
   - D. Hispanic (Includes people of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American descent)
   - E. White

4. I am a FFA member
   A. Yes
   B. No

5. I work with a mentee of the opposite sex
   A. Yes
   B. No

6. My mentee is from an ethnic group other than my own
   A. Yes
   B. No

7. I would like to continue in Project Pals next year
   A. Yes
   B. No

8. I have one or more friends who have dropped-out of school
   A. Yes
   B. No

9. I was a mentor last year
   A. Yes
   B. No

Continue to answer the questions below on the scantron form. Please use the following scale when answering the questions and make sure to bubble in the appropriate response bubble.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

I have benefited from Project Pals:

10. My mentee and I are friends.
11. I expect more from myself because I am a PAL.
12. My mentee expects me to lead and set a good example.

Project Pals helped me improve my attitude toward school:

13. My grades have improved since I became a PAL.
14. My school attendance has improved since I became a PAL.
15. My self discipline at school has improved since I became a PAL.
16. I participate in more activities since I became a PAL.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

Project Pals helped improve my attitude toward home:

17. I understand my parents/guardians better since I became a PAL.
18. My behavior at home has improved since I became a PAL.
19. My parents/guardians were supportive of my being a PAL.

Project Pals helped improve my attitude toward work:

20. I am more responsible about work since I became a PAL.
21. I have set goals for current/future work since I became a PAL.

Project Pals helped improve my attitude toward myself:

22. I feel more motivated and responsible since I became a PAL.
23. I feel more self confident since I became a PAL.
24. My self-esteem has been raised since I became a PAL.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

Project Pals helped improve my attitude toward children:

25. I think my mentee respects me.
26. I am more tolerant of younger students since I became a PAL.
27. I look forward to meeting with my mentee.

Project Pals helped improve my attitude toward peers:

28. I enjoy interacting with people.
29. Most of my friends approve of my being a PAL.

I helped my mentee benefit from Project PALS:

30. I helped my mentee by caring and listening.
31. I helped my mentee by being a good role model.
32. I helped my mentee by assisting with school work.

Staying in school is important:

33. Liking school is a reason for staying school.
34. Wanting to go to college is a reason to stay in school.
35. Being with my friends is a reason to stay in school.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

36. My parents/guardians tell me it is important to stay in school.

My Project Pal training was helpful:

37. I need more training in Leadership.

38. I need more training in Listening/Communication skills.

39. I need more training in Human development.

Please answer the questions below on this page. When you are finished, return this packet and your complete scantron sheet to your teacher. Thank you!

Besides mentoring, I participate in the following activities outside the school:

Baby-sitting:	Yes _____	No _____
I have a job:	Yes _____	No _____
Girl/Boy scouts:	Yes _____	No _____
Help out with chores at home:	Yes _____	No _____
Other: _____	Yes _____	No _____

What did you like best about Project Pals?

What parts of Project Pals need to be improved and what changes would you recommend?

PROJECT

PALS

For those who care!

Parent/Guardian Survey

The National FFA Organization is conducting an evaluation of Project Pals. Your Project Pals program has been selected at random to participate in this study. Your answers are very important because you represent many other parents of mentors/mentees across the United States.

INSTRUCTIONS:

By answering this survey, you provide information to help us improve Project Pals. Please use a #2 pencil to "bubble" the responses on the attached "scantron" form. Please be sure to completely fill in the appropriate response "bubbles" to ensure accurate electronic tabulation. **Please do not fold or alter the scantron form.** Thank you for your help!

REQUESTED INFORMATION:

The "Name," "Section," and "Student Identification Number" sections on the scantron form are being used to code each form to ensure that your responses are completely anonymous. You do not need to bubble in these sections.

1. My child is in
   - A. high school (a mentor).
   - B. elementary school (a mentee).

Continue to answer the questions below on the scantron form. Please use the following scale when answering the questions and make sure to bubble in the appropriate response bubble.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

My child benefited from Project Pals participation:

2. Mentor and mentee became friends.

3. Mentor/mentee demanded more of him/herself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

4. The mentee benefited from having a good role model.

5. The mentee benefited from the help with school work.

Project Pals improved my child's attitude toward school:

6. My child's grades have improved since Project Pals.

7. My child's school attendance has improved since Project Pals.

8. My child's discipline at school has improved since Project Pals.

9. My child is more involved in activities since Project Pals.

Project Pals improved my child's attitude toward home:

10. My child seems to understand me better since Project Pals.

11. My child's behavior at home has improved since Project Pals.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

Project Pals improved my child's attitude toward work:

12. My child likes to work since Project Pals.

13. My child has goals for current/future work since Project Pals.

Project Pals improved my child's attitude toward children:

14. My child is more motivated and responsible since Project Pals.

15. My child is more self confident since Project Pals.

16. My child's self -esteem has been raised since Project Pals.

Project Pals improved my child's attitudes toward children:

17. My child has gained respect for mentor/mentee.

18. My child is more tolerant of younger children since Project Pals.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

19. My child enjoys the mentoring sessions.

20. I was supportive of my child being in Project Pals.

21. I attended meetings and socials that I was invited to.

22. I helped with transportation and materials.

My child is weak in the following areas:

23. Before Project Pals, my child was weak in Reading/Writing.

24. Before Project Pals, my child was weak in Mathematics.

25. Before Project Pals, my child was weak in Social Skills.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D	E

Since participating in Project Pals, my child has shown improvement in:

26. Since Project Pals, my child has shown improvement in Reading/Writing.

27. Since Project Pals, my child has shown improvement in Mathematics.

28. Since Project Pals, my child has shown improvement in Social Skills.

Project Pals has helped mentor/mentee stay in school by:

29. Since participating in Project Pals, my child likes school.

30. Since participating in Project Pals, my child wants to go to college.

31. Since participating in Project Pals, my child likes being with friends.

32. I tell my child that staying in school is important.

33. Project Pals helped in keeping my child in school.

Please answer the questions below on this page. When you are finished, return this packet and your complete scantron sheet to your child's teacher. Thank you!

What are the most positive aspects of the project?

What aspects of the project need the most improvement and what changes would you recommend?

PROJECT

PALS

For those who care!

Counselor/Teacher Survey

The National FFA Organization is conducting an evaluation of Project Pals. Your Project Pals program has been selected at random to participate in this study. Your answers are very important because you represent many other counselor/teacher teams across the United States.

INSTRUCTIONS:

By answering this survey, you provide information to help us improve Project Pals. The counselor and teacher most familiar with the mentors should confer to respond to one questionnaire. The counselor and teacher most familiar with the mentees should confer to respond to one questionnaire. Answer the questions by choosing the percentage (of mentors, mentees, parents, etc.) for whom the statement is true. Please use a #2 pencil to "bubble" the responses on the attached "scantron" form. Please be sure to completely fill in the appropriate response "bubbles" to ensure accurate electronic tabulation. **Please do not fold or alter the scantron form.** Thank you for your help!

REQUESTED INFORMATION:

The "Name," "Section," and "Student Identification Number" sections on the scantron form are being used to code each form to ensure that your responses are completely anonymous. You do not need to bubble in these sections.

1. We are the Counselor/Teacher of
   - A. High School Students (Mentors)
   - B. Elementary Students (Mentees)

Continue to answer the questions below on the scantron form. Please use the following scale when answering the questions and make sure to bubble in the appropriate response bubble.

None (0-19%)	Few (20-39%)	Some (40-59%)	Most (60-79%)	All (80-100%)
A	B	C	D	E

Mentors/ mentees benefited from Project Pals participation:

2. Mentors and mentees became friends because of Project Pals.

None (0-19%)	Few (20-39%)	Some (40-59%)	Most (60-79%)	All (80-100%)
A	B	C	D	E

3. Mentors demanded more of themselves because of Project Pals.

4. The mentee benefited from having a good role model.

5. The mentee benefited from the help with school work.

Project Pals improved student attitudes toward school:

6. Since Project Pals, Mentors'/Mentees' grades have improved.

7. Since Project Pals, Mentors'/Mentees' school attendance has improved.

8. Since Project Pals, Mentors'/Mentees' discipline at school has improved.

None (0-19%)	Few (20-39%)	Some (40-59%)	Most (60-79%)	All (80-100%)
A	B	C	D	E

Project Pals improved student attitudes toward home:

9. Since Project Pals, Mentors/Mentees seem to understand parents better.

10. Since Project Pals, parents report improved behavior at home.

11. Since Project Pals, parents report more participation in home activities.

Project Pals improved student attitudes toward work:

12. Since Project Pals, Mentors are more responsible about work.

13. Since Project Pals, Mentors have goals for current/future work.

Project Pals improved student attitudes toward self:

14. Since Project Pals, Mentors/Mentees are more motivated and responsible.

15. Since Project Pals, Mentors/Mentees are more self confident.

16. Since Project Pals, Mentors'/Mentees' self-esteems have been raised.

None (0-19%)	Few (20-39%)	Some (40-59%)	Most (60-79%)	All (80-100%)
A	B	C	D	E

Project Pals improved student attitudes toward children:

17. Mentors have gained respect of mentees.

18. Since Project Pals, Mentors are more tolerant of younger children.

19. Mentors and mentees enjoy their sessions together.

Project Pals improved student attitudes toward peers:

20. Since Project Pals, Mentors/Mentees enjoy interacting with people.

21. Since Project Pals, Mentors and mentees have peer approval and support.

None (0-19%)	Few (20-39%)	Some (40-59%)	Most (60-79%)	All (80-100%)
A	B	C	D	E

Project Pals training was helpful:

22. Mentors need more training in Leadership.

23. Mentors need more training in Communication Skills.

24. Mentors need more training in Human Development.

The reasons mentors/mentees stay in school:

25. Mentors/mentees like school.

26. Mentors want to go to college.

27. Mentors/mentees like being with friends.

28. Mentors'/mentees' parents tell them staying in school is important.

Project Pals had positive support:

29. Other teachers in the school building supported the project.

30. Mentors'/mentees' parents were supportive and involved.

31. Community members were involved with the project.

32. The school administrators supported the project.

Please answer the questions below on this page. Thank you!

What are the most positive aspects of the project?

What aspects of the project need the most improvement and what changes would you recommend?

APPENDIX B LIST OF CHAPTERS PARTICIPATING IN SAMPLE

Ms. Sherrie Stewart
Breathitt County High School
406 Court Street
Jackson, KY 41339

Mr. Bill Jimmerson
Conrad High School
215 S. Maryland
Conrad, MT 59425

Mr. Kurt Dillon
Atwood High School
100 North 8th
Atwood, KS 67730

Mr. Tony Rose
Whitley County High School
350 Blvd. of Champions
Williamsburg, KY 40769

Mr. Larry Reyburn
Cedar Springs High School
204 East Muskegon
Cedar Springs, MI 49319

Mr. Greg Krenke
Haven High School
400 East Fifth
Haven, KS 67543

Ms. Liesl Holtz
Hobson High School
P.O. Box 410
Hobson, MT 59452

Mr. Mike McConnell
Lander Valley High School
1000 Main Street
Lander, WY 82520

Mr. Bruce Farquhar
Altus High School
400 North Park Avenue
Altus, OK 73521

Mr. Randy Wiggins
Warden High School
101 W. Beck Way
P. O. Box 308
Warden, WA 98857

Mr. Charles Franklin
Hamburg High School
South Main Street
Hamburg, AR 71646

Mr. David Black
Fulton County High School
2740 Moscow Ave.
Hickman, KY 42050

Ms. Terressa Curtis
Emerson High School
P O Box 100
Emerson, AR 71740

Mr. Cy Vernon
Bartlett Yancey High School
POB 190
466 Main Street E.
Yanceyville, NC 27379

Mr. Jim Hager
Pocahontas Jr. High School
2405 North Park Street
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Mr. Wilbur Buntin
Erie High School
410 West Third
Erie, KS 66733

Mr. Ralph Perkins
Panguitch High School
POB 393
Panguitch, UT 84759

Ms. Carol Webb
Mineral Co Vo-Tech
600 South Water Street Ext.
Keyser, WV 26726

Mr. Gary Fontenot
Lacassine High School
P O Box E Hwy. 90
Lacassine, LA 70650

Mr. Gary Wood
Pahranagat Valley High School
POB 198
Alamo, NV 89001

Mr. Tim Arkfeld
Syracuse FFA Chapter
1500 Education Drive
P.O. Box P
Syracuse, NE 68446-0520

Mr. Dennis Everhart
Woodlin High School
15400 Country Road L Box 185
Woodrow, CO 80757

Mr. Greg Davis
Freedom High School
511 Independence Blvd.
Morganton, NC 28655

Mr. Keith Walker
Thomas McKean High School
301 McKennan's Church Road
Wilmington, DE 19808

Mr. Bill Fox
Clinton Prairie High School
2400S. County Rd. 450W.
Frankfort, IN 46041

Mr. Jay Craven
St. James R-I High School
101 East Scioto Street
St. James, MO 65559-1798

Mr. Phillip Kilgore
Clayton High School
P O Box 339
Clayton, AL 36016

Mr. Steven Beattie
St. Louis High School
201 East Saginaw
St. Louis, MI 48880

Ms. Wilson
Barbers Hill High School
P O Box 1108
Mt. Belvieu, TX 77580

Mr. Richard McGown
Triton Central High School
4774 W 600 N
Fairland, IN 46126

Mr. Gralan Zumbach
Creston High School
601 W. Townline
Creston, IA 50801

Mr. Kraig Kelican
Fauquier High School
707 Waterloo Road
Warrenton, VA 22186

APPENDIX C INSTRUCTION SHEET FOR SAMPLE

February 5, 1996

«Title» «FirstName» «LastName»
«School» «number»
«Address1»
«Address2»
«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear «Title» «LastName»:

Hello! Thank you for agreeing to participate in an evaluation of the Project PALS Program. The National FFA Organization and Agricultural Education at Purdue University are conducting this evaluation to determine the value of Project PALS to the mentors, mentees, school, and community. The evaluation consists of three surveys: one completed by mentors, one completed by parents of both mentors and mentee, and one completed by the teachers and counselors.

You are one of 32 schools across the United States that were chosen at random to participate in this study. Your participation is valuable because the information from your program will be used to describe thousands of other Project PALS participants.

Enclosed are the materials that you will need to conduct the survey. Please take a few minutes to compare the contents with the item list below.

The Teacher Instructions Sheet is extremely important. **Please read this before** administering the surveys to the students. We need for you to follow these instructions as closely as possible so that all schools administer the surveys consistently. After administering and collecting the surveys, please return the scantron sheets and completed surveys to me in the postage-paid return envelope before **March 15, 1996**.

The following materials should be in this packet.

Teacher Instruction Sheet

Enough tan Parent/Guardian Surveys and tan scantron sheets for each set of parents/guardians for mentors and mentees.

Enough green Mentor Surveys and green scantron sheets for each mentors.

Two red Counselor/Teacher Surveys and two red scantron sheets. One set for the agriculture teacher and high school counselors and one set for the elementary teacher and counselor.

One postage-paid return envelope.

If you have any questions or if you need extra materials, please call me at (317) 494-7290. If you are interested in obtaining the results, they should be available by June, 1996. Thank you for your participation in the study.

Sincerely,

B. Allen Talbert
Assistant Professor, Agricultural Education

TEACHER INSTRUCTION SHEET

1. The **green** Mentor Surveys and **green** scantron sheets are to be given to all of the **mentors**. Please have the mentors complete the surveys in your class and collect both the survey packets and scantron sheets when the students are finished. They are to answer questions 1 through 39 on the scantron sheet by bubbling in the corresponding response item. On page 4 of the survey are several questions that are to be answered on the survey form. Place completed scantron sheets and surveys in the postage-paid return envelope.

2. The **tan** Parent/Guardian Surveys and **tan** scantron sheets are to be given to **both mentors and mentees** to take home and have their **parents/guardians** complete. Request that surveys be completed the night sent home and returned the next day. Impress upon students the importance of this information. If you have direct contact with the parents, such as at a meeting, feel free to administer the surveys yourself. The parents/guardians are to answer questions 1 through 33 on the scantron sheet by bubbling in the corresponding response item. On page 4 of the survey are two questions that are to be answered on the survey form. Place completed scantron sheets and surveys in the postage-paid return envelope.

3. The **red** Counselor/Teacher Surveys and **red** scantron sheets are to be complete by yourself/project director, other teachers involved, and counselors. One set is for **the agriculture teacher and high school counselors** and one set is for **the elementary teacher and counselor**. Request that surveys be completed immediately and returned to you. Impress upon them the importance of this information. Questions 1 through 32 are to be completed on the scantron sheet by bubbling in the corresponding response item. On page 4 of the survey are two questions that are to be answered on the survey form. Place completed scantron sheets and surveys in the postage-paid return envelope.

4. Students may not understand a particular item. Please assist them with any questions they may have.

5. Respondents **must use a #2 pencil** on the scantron sheet.

6. Here are some general instructions:

   The survey is being used to improve the Project PALS Program. THIS IS NOT A TEST. It will not be graded. Answers should reflect true feelings. Each question is asked for a specific purpose. Some of the questions may sound similar, but they are different. Read and answer each one carefully. Please answer all of the questions. No other information should be written on the scantron form. Respondents are asked to answer each numbered item on the survey by filling in the bubble corresponding to their response on the survey. Only one bubble can be filled in for each item. Completely fill in the bubble. Completely erase any stray marks.

7. After all respondents have completed the survey, please mail the postage-paid return envelope IMMEDIATELY. You need to return the scantron sheets and survey booklets. After the students have completed the surveys, feel free to use the booklet to generate a class discussion on Project PALS or other topics.

APPENDIX D QUALITATIVE SITE VISIT QUESTIONS

PALS Evaluation

Agriculture Teacher Interview Questions

1. Describe the agriculture program and FFA at your school.

2. How did you get involved in Project PALS? When did the program start? How are the students selected?

3. Describe the first year and subsequent years in terms of:

   What activities do the students conduct?

   How are the activities conducted?

   What are the logistics of the program? (who, what, when, where, how)

4. Describe your impressions of the Project PALS materials in terms of:

   Notebook

   Videos

   Suggested activities

   Setting up local adult leadership teams

   Training of mentors

5. Have you noticed an impact on:

   Mentors/mentees (retention, academics, attendance, skills, info, personal development)

   The Agriculture Program (recruitment, interest, FFA, support, other)

   School (students' self-esteem/self-concept improved, other)

   Community (parental involvement, greater attention paid to youth development, greater knowledge of state and national programs/resources for youth development, social impact)

6. How are students followed-up from year to year?

7. From your perspective, what have been some major successes of the program?

8. From your perspective, what should be done to make the program better? What should be done to make sure the program continues from one year to the next?

9. How do you see Project PALS fitting into FFA, the agriculture program, your school, and the community future plans?

10. Other comments.

PALS Evaluation

Counselor Interview Questions

1. Describe your involvement in Project PALS at your school.

2. Describe your impressions of the Project PALS Program at your school.

3. Have you noticed an impact on:

   Mentors/mentees (retention, academics, attendance, skills, info, personal development)

   School

   Community

4. From your perspective, what have been some major successes of the program?

5. From your perspective, what should be done to make the program better?

6. How do you see Project PALS fitting into FFA, the agriculture program, your school, and the community future plans?

7. Other comments.

PALS Evaluation

Elementary/Other Teacher Interview Questions

1. Describe your involvement in Project PALS at your school.

2. How did you get involved in Project PALS? How are the students selected?

3. What activities do the students conduct?

4. Describe your impressions of the Project PALS Program at your school.

5. Have you noticed an impact on:

   Mentors/mentees (retention, academics, attendance, skills, info, personal development)

   School

   Community

6. How are students followed-up from year to year?

7. From your perspective, what have been some major successes of the program?

8. From your perspective, what should be done to make the program better?

9. How do you see Project PALS fitting into FFA, the agriculture program, your school, and the community future plans?

10. Other comments.

PALS Evaluation

Principal Interview Questions

1. Describe your school.

2. Describe the community that your school serves.

3. Describe your impressions of the Project PALS Program at your school.

4. Have you noticed an impact on:

   Mentors/mentees (retention, academics, attendance, skills, info, personal development)

   School

   Community

5. From your perspective, what have been some major successes of the program?

6. From your perspective, what should be done to make the program better?

7. How do you see Project PALS fitting into FFA, the agriculture program, your school, and the community future plans?

8. Other comments.

APPENDIX E LIST OF CHAPTERS PARTICIPATING IN SITE VISITS

Mr. Mark Zimmerman
Spencer High School
Spencer, WI 54479

Mr. Eric Fitzgerald
Turner Ashby High School
Bridgewater, VA 22812

Mr. Blaine Marable
Morgan County High School
1231 College Drive
Madison, GA 30650

Ms. Barbie Schmidt
McCullough High School
3800 South Panther Creek Drive
The Woodlands, TX 77381

APPENDIX F INSTRUCTION SHEET FOR SITE VISITS

February 15, 1996

Mark Zimmerman
Spencer High School
Spencer, WI 54479

Dear Mark:

Thank you for agreeing to a site visit for an evaluation of the National FFA Project PALS Program. I will be visiting on Wednesday, March 27, 1996. Detailed below is a sample schedule to follow. The order of activities and times of day can be changed to reflect your particular situation. Please give me a call if there is a problem or if changes need to be made. I will call you the week before to reconfirm everything.

Activity	**Time**
Arrive Marshfield Super 8 Motel, 3/26/96	7:00 p.m. (?)
Observe Mentor/Mentee Meeting/Presentation, 3/27/96	a.m. (?)
Interview Principals and Counselors	a.m. (?)
Interview yourself and elementary teachers	p.m. (?)
Supper and Interviews with parents	6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. (?)

I will be driving from Purdue to Marshfield on March 26th and depart on March 28th. I'm estimating that the trip will take nine hours. I will take care of calling the Super 8 toll-free telephone number and making reservations. I will arrive at Spencer High School the morning of the 27th to begin my observations and interviews. I will check in at the main office upon my arrival.

Mark, please inform the principals, counselors, other teachers, and parents of this schedule. As you can see, there are many question marks that you will need to supply me with the exact times. I would like to spend 15 - 30 minutes for each interview asking the person questions about the Project PALS program. If possible, I would like to ask the mentors/mentees some general questions about their opinions toward the program. I would suggest that you invite three sets of parents for mentors and three for mentees to the supper. Please make arrangements at an appropriate restaurant for me. There will be no cost to the parents, nor yourself and your spouse.

Again, thanks for allowing me to visit. I am looking forward to visiting Wisconsin and your agriculture program. Please call me when you have determined some of the specifics.

Sincerely,

B. Allen Talbert